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/Pl. I faces p. 145./

101 36 16 The last group of Uru Indians living in the village of Iru-Itu, or Angoake, on the banks of the Desaguadero, about 25 kilometers from Lake Titicaca, has almost entirely disappeared in the course of the last years.

● 73 133 A long period of drought between 1940 and 1945 has lowered the level of Lake Titicaca by more than three meters; at many points the water has receded several hundred meters.

[101] [60] [137] At the time of my first trip in 1938, the village of Iru-Itu had about 100 inhabitants; the Desaguadero went through vast swamps dotted with numerous ponds and lagoons with a great abundance of totora beds /totorales/. In 1941 a plain of sterile sand had replaced the swamps and fields of reeds; the Desaguadero was reduced to a narrow, muddy ditch.

73 43 198 Because of this the Uru have lost practically all their means of existence. The swamps covered with reeds, the totora beds, furnished them with the Scirpus necessary to make their fishing balsas and to cover their houses and served as shelter for numerous aquatic fauna: fish, suches (Trichomycterus dispar and rivulatus), bogas, hispe, carache (various Orestias), and birds sought by the Indians for their meat and eggs. Their entire economy, based partly on hunting and fishing and partly on the sale of totora fishing balsas and mats to the neighboring Indians, has thus been destroyed.

16 [167] [88] [178] Many of the Uru are dead. Others, the young ones, have dispersed, mingling with the neighboring Aymara groups; some have joined the Lake Titicaca fishers. The old ones, more attached to their customs and their /146/ traditions and incapable of adapting themselves to new conditions of existence, have remained in the dead village.

[356] In 1944 most of the houses had been abandoned; the totora roofs could not be repaired for lack of reeds, and many had [162] [144] given way. Only 21 people remained in the village; several women were of Aymara origin, and the few children were in part Uru-Aymara half-breeds.

/146 cont./

[61] According to the latest news the group of Iru-Itu seems to [62] be reduced to some 12 people, although since 1946 the level [133] of the lake has risen considerably; in February 1947 it had already risen 90 centimeters. This rising movement is continuing, and the totora beds are slowly beginning to reform.

[731] The old Uru remembered having seen in their youth, around 1870, an even worse drought than that of these last years. But at that time they were more numerous and the group was able to subsist. Now it is too diminished to reconstitute itself and its disappearance seems definite.

[01] I visited the Uru of Iru-Itu for the first time in 1938. Dur-
[21] ing my stay in Bolivia from 1940 to 1944 I was in constant contact with them. Their misery and their decline did not allow me to glean important observations on their material culture, already studied by the numerous ethnographers who have stayed among the Uru of the Desaguadero. Their imminent disappearance made it necessary, however, to bring together everything which might still exist among them: anthropological observations, traditions, and linguistic records, in order to compare them with the other populations of the region and especially with the different groups of fishers on Lake Titicaca.

These are the results of this study, the publication of which we are beginning.

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Note I

Accounts and Conversations

[19] The linguistic records at our disposal on the Uru are reduced to some quick observations and more or less expanded vocabularies gathered by travelers in the course of brief stays in the region of Iru-Itu. Métraux is the only one to have published texts in the Chipaya dialect. No text exists in the Iru-Itu dialect, and the best sources of linguistic information on

3:Vellard--7 D.E-5 (1938-1944) 1949 SF24 Uru SF24

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I. The Misery of the Uru
(Account by Manuel Inta)

(See p. 151 /in the foreign text/)

000 /Note. As a result of the difficulty of obtaining the typographical signs for the exact transcription of the Uru words included in the remarks, we have been obliged to transcribe a certain number of words in an approximate fashion and more or less successfully. It will therefore not be surprising that there are differences of transcription between the texts, which have been reproduced by a photographic process, and the remarks. It goes without saying that only the transcription of the texts is exact./

Free Translation

530 931 198 433 511 1. We shall never be able to go from here; we all are too much accustomed to be here since always. 2. But our fields will give us very little. 3. This year is too dry and the potatoes are not growing. 4. The frosts have burned everything. 5. That is why we are leaving. 6. Now what shall we do? 7. In the swamp which is drying up there are no more suche (kind of fish). 8. There are no more reeds and there are no more birds' eggs. 9. All the eggs have departed into the great lake of Guaqui. 10. The fish have left for Guaqui. 11. How will we eat now? 12. If it rains enough this year we shall live. 13. We shall all return to our village. 14. If it does not rain (enough) we shall die. 15. We eat the little potatoes which we cultivate for the people of another race (the Aymara). 16. We earn them by cultivating for them. 17. There are few fish and we have only caught one. 13. We shall sell it. 19. Thou hast seen how small it is. 20. It is necessary to go far to fish. 21. We are accustomed to going home at night. 22. We shall return home to sell (our catch).

/170 cont./

23. We are going to sell them to the people of the other race, at three for one real.

/171/ Remarks

This account, dictated by an old Uru about 90 years old, Manuel Inta, is a commentary on the wide dispersal of the Uru, undoubtedly permanent, after a series of years of drought, 1940 to 1946. In 1944 there were only a few old people in their old village of Iru-Itu. The drought had destroyed the vast swamps of the Desaguadero and their reed fields, the source of all the activity of these Indians, bringing about the disappearance of the conditions which had made it possible for them to maintain their ethnic individuality in the midst of the Aymara populations. These complaints express the bitterness of the old Urus, fishers and gatherers, obliged, in order not to starve to death, to change their economy, working in the fields of their Aymara neighbors. The young Urus have dispersed, some having mingled with the Aymara or Amaracized fishers of Lake Titicaca, others having established themselves in Aymara villages or communities.

wáki, Bolivian village of Guaqui, on the small lake.

ɔx'ɜa, literally, "different," the people of another race, the Aymaras. Note the particle čᵘ intercalated between the root and the ending of the verb: Káya -čúčay, tánáču- čay, lúx-náču -čay, in order to reinforce the idea expressed by the verb and to indicate a customary action. The particle ki intercalated between the root of the verb and the ending čay indicates the future. The verb Káči- čay means "to engage in business," "to sell" as well as "to buy," or "to earn money." tumíni, a tomin (old Spanish coin): a word unknown to the present lake Aymaras but still used by some natives of the Puno region.

Note three other Hispanicisms: 1. kustúmbro, "custom"; 5. isú-čay, esto or eso, "that"; 17. ni- únu, "this alone," from the Spanish uno, "one."

SF24 Uru SF24
Iru Iru

341 [896] were some withered Palm-Sunday decorations made from the rushes which border the river. They were plaited and twisted and fringed and hung on rusty nails. The door stood partially open. A low adobe-wall surrounded the building. There were no [231] tombs in evidence. A family of donkeys had taken up their residence there. We gave them some biscuit and apple, and they followed us down the stony 126 path to where the village was assembled. The cameras were ticking, and our chauffeur Carlos had been promoted to stagehand with a wooden clapper. Our star was continuing her role with renewed enthusiasm; leaning against the wall were two boys 11 or 12 years old, one had beautiful smooth regular features. I photographed him, but he never moved, nor seemed conscious of our presence. We left him [396] standing motionless and followed the younger one [283] down to the river where a man was plaiting rushes, preparatory to making a balsa.

804 [1031] Some fifteen years ago the whole region suffered from a severe draught. The waterlevel of the lake descended from twelve to fifteen feet and many of the marshes dried out, and the reeds, the *totora*, withered and disappeared. These totoras play as important a part among the Uru as the llama among [501] the Aymara or Quechua on the Altiplano. While the [364] stems are used for making balsas, sails and ropes, [213] the roots or *kzouras* are the staple diet of the Uru, who also use it to brew a kind of beer, allowing the tubercles to ferment.

132 Fortunately in these last few years the climatic con-
137 ditions have once more returned to normal, and with the rise of the lake the totoras have once more in-
501 creased. These rafts, with their tall pointed bows, have the gracefulness of a gondola. They are composed of three cylinders, two forming the sides and
396 one the centre. The rushes are plaited into long
283 braids, the end being held between the man's toes. These braids are then plaited together and together again, and all these ropes are assembled, moistened and laced together. Two men work simultaneously,

[p. 313-A]